

Jordan Times

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'Israel has stockpiled nuclear bombs'

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel had stockpiled plutonium for an estimated 200 nuclear bombs and has the capability to build neutron weapons, a newspaper on Wednesday quoted a British nuclear scientist as saying. Previous reports have said Israel has built at least 100 nuclear bombs, ranking it sixth among the world's nuclear powers. Israel has acknowledged it conducts nuclear research, but officials have refused comment on Israeli-built nuclear weapons. British scientist Frank Barnaby told the daily Haaretz in an interview from London that Israel has produced plutonium for an estimated 200 bombs in the past 10 years. Dr. Barnaby is the former director of the Swedish Institute of Peace Research, which monitors nuclear proliferation. Asked why Israel would need such a large arsenal, Dr. Barnaby said: "I assume we're talking about... momentum. It (Israel) has the material, the knowledge and the manpower, so why not? It's not a rational process." Dr. Barnaby also said that while Israel does not possess a neutron weapon, it has "the professional ability and materials needed to build it."

Lebanon protests to U.N. against Israel

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Lebanon protested to the United Nations on Wednesday against an Israeli commando raid on Sunday night that it said left seven Lebanese dead and four wounded. "The Lebanese government strongly condemns this serious criminal action and cautions that Israel is continuing to flout the rules of international law, the letter and spirit of the United Nations Charter, and the resolutions adopted by United Nations bodies," Lebanese U.N. representative Rashid Fakhroury said. In a letter to Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar, he said an Israeli commando force of about 40 men went ashore on the Lebanese coast south of Saida, 40 kilometres north of the Israeli border "Using fast boats and helicopters, they attacked with missiles and machine-guns, leaving seven dead and four wounded — all Lebanese — before withdrawing under cover of intense bombardment from the sea and from the air." Mr. Fakhroury added: "The pretext which Israel cites in justification of this criminal act, namely its campaign against the terrorist activities of which it is the target, amounts to a further escalation of the intensive propaganda campaign Israel is mounting to mislead international public opinion."

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Eid holidays begin on Monday

AMMAN (Petra) — All ministries and government departments and public institutions will be closed from Monday, Aug. 3 to Friday, Aug. 7, on the occasion of 'Eid Al Adha (Feast of Sacrifice)', according to a circular issued Wednesday by Prime Minister Zeid Rifai. The circular said that ministries and government departments and public institutions would return to work on Saturday, Aug. 8.

I killed, 8 hurt in Gaza blast

TEL AVIV (R) — A nine-year-old boy was killed and eight other Palestinians were injured on Wednesday when an Arab boy threw a hand grenade into a shop in the occupied Gaza Strip, police sources said. They said two people were seriously injured in the explosion in Khan Ynsi which occurred after three Palestinian boys began playing with hand grenades they found in a rubbish bin near the shop. A 100-year-old man was among the casualties. The army immediately clamped a curfew on the area, the sources said.

Bonn to resume loans to Syria

FRANKFURT (R) — West Germany has started to lend money to Syria again after stopping last year when it suspected that Syria was implicated in a West Berlin bomb attack, the Economic Cooperation Ministry said Wednesday. The government decided this month to resume development aid and is assessing projects for loans totalling 146 million marks (\$79 million), a ministry spokeswoman said from Bonn.

U.S. Senate panel approves 11 envoys

WASHINGTON (USIA) — The Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted on Tuesday to approve the nominations of eleven new U.S. ambassadors, including two to the Near East area. The nominees that received a unanimous vote were: W. Nathaniel Howell to be ambassador to Kuwait; and Roscoe Seldon Sudarth to be ambassador to Jordan; Warren Clark, to be ambassador to Gabon and to serve concurrently as ambassador to the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe; Mark L. Edelman (Cameron); Samuel Eldred Lupo (Guinea); Robert G. Rich (Belize); Leonard Grant (Congo); Theresa Anne Tull (Guyana); and Michael G. Wygant to be U.S. representative to Micronesia. Also, by a 13-4 vote, the committee approved Richard N. Viets to be ambassador to Portugal; by a 17-1 vote, it approved Nicholas Platt to be ambassador to the Philippines.

Junblatt meets pro-Iran group leaders

BAALBEK, Lebanon (R) — Lebanese Druze leader Walid Junblatt met pro-Iranian officials in their northeastern stronghold of Baalbek after pledging to support Iran against the French army, Muslim fundamentalist sources said Wednesday. Mr. Junblatt refused comment after a one-hour meeting Tuesday night with Sheikh Subhi Tufaili of Hizbollah (Party of God), and Hussein Mousawi of Islamic Amal.

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France orders naval task force to Mideast

PARIS (Agencies) — A French aircraft carrier and three escort ships will put to sea by midday Thursday after being placed on alert for possible duty in the Gulf war zone, the Defence Ministry said.

The ministry earlier announced that the task force, crewed by 3,000 men, would sail "on a mission to protect French interests in the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean."

France, citing escalating tension in the Middle East, put the aircraft carrier Clemenceau, the guided-missile destroyers Duquesne and Suffren and the supply ship Meuse on alert over the weekend.

"Its mission is to head towards the Indian Ocean to protect French interests if necessary," Prime Minister Jacques Chirac told a news conference.

"We have no aggressive intentions but we demand respect," he said after a meeting with British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

A Defence Ministry spokesman said the order meant the ships would leave the port of

Toulon, the base of France's Mediterranean fleet, within 24 hours. Officials in Toulon said the ships, commanded by Admiral Hervé Le Pichon, would lift anchor between 0900 and 1000 GMT.

Defence officials said the move was not intended to escalate France's diplomatic conflict with Iran, which led to a break in relations on July 17. They repeated that the order to sail was a precaution but declined to say whether the warships would head straight for the Gulf.

The U.S. navy is escorting oil tankers past Iranian anti-aircraft missile emplacements and gunboats in the Gulf but France has ruled out any such high-profile manoeuvres.

The French vessels would take 15 days to reach the Gulf area although the government has ruled out the Clemenceau enter-

ing the strategic waterway itself.

France and Iran are locked in a row over the refusal of an Iranian embassy interpreter, Vahid Gordji, to testify on his alleged links with last year's bombing campaigns in Paris which killed 13 people. Embassies in both capitals are ringed by police.

France has a command ship and two frigates in or near the Gulf, but its small Indian Ocean fleet lacks air cover and anti-aircraft defences.

The Clemenceau, which recently had a major refit, can carry up to 40 aircraft, including Super Etendard strike planes, and has a Crotale air defence system.

Iranian gunboats machine-gunned the French container ship Ville d'Anvers on July 13 in an attack linked by French officials to the diplomatic crisis.

Defence experts note that the task force does not include mine-sweepers, suggesting the French navy does not intend to move into the Gulf in force.

Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati has dismissed the French naval alert as shah-rattling designed to please domestic

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High seas delay Bridgeton loading and mine-clearing operations in Gulf

KUWAIT (Agencies) — High seas on Wednesday delayed loading of the mine-damaged Kuwaiti supertanker Bridgeton and U.S. navy efforts to clear mines from its route out of the Gulf, shipping sources quoted by news agencies said.

They said the 401,382-tonne vessel berthed briefly Wednesday morning at an offshore terminal 16 kilometres from the coast but strong winds of more than 20 knots forced it to move back to its anchorage.

The weather also affected U.S. mine-hunting efforts in the channel where the Bridgeton was holed last Friday near Iran's Farsi Island about 240 kilometres southeast of Kuwait.

The sources said navy experts operating out of helicopters with sonar equipment had been prevented from continuing their survey of the area.

A Pentagon official said in Washington on Tuesday more mines had been found near the

U.S. to send mine-sweeping helicopters to Gulf

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States will send eight big mine-sweeping helicopters to the Gulf to help clear seaplanes for U.S. shipping, defence officials said Wednesday.

"They are expected to be in the Gulf and ready to operate during the first week in August," said one official, who asked not to be identified. The officials told Reuters the Sikorsky MH-53E Super Stallion helicopters were sent past aboard the U.S. navy helicopter ship Guadalcanal in the Indian Ocean and the ship would be sent into the Gulf as a floating platform.

The Bridgeton and a smaller ship, the gas carrier Gas Prince, were the first of 11 Kuwaiti tankers to gain U.S. naval protection after registering under the American flag.

Iran had raided shipping linked with Kuwait in retaliation for the emirate's support for Baghdad in the seven-year-old Iran-Iraq war. On Monday, it threatened to hit Kuwaiti targets with surface-to-

surface missiles.

been discovered in the narrow Farsi Island channel.

The mine punched a hole the size of a small truck in the bottom of the Bridgeton on its maiden voyage through the Gulf under U.S. flag and naval escort.

But the U.S. coast guard gave a verbal go-ahead on Tuesday for the ship to load two-thirds of its capacity — about 260,000 tonnes — and proceed at half-speed to customers waiting outside the Gulf off the United Arab Emirates.

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OAU summit calls for sanctions against S. Africa

ADDIS ABABA (Agencies) — The Organisation of African Unity on Wednesday urged member nations to cut air and shipping links with South Africa and adopt other sanctions against its white-ruled government.

The call came in a declaration issued by the 50-member pan-African group on the last day of a three-day summit dominated by discussions on South Africa, the continent's economic crisis and the Chad-Libya territorial dispute.

The summit averted a showdown between Chad and Libya over the disputed Aouzou Strip by reviving a committee charged with finding a peaceful settlement.

The summit asked President Omar Bongo of Gabon, chairman of a previous mediation committee, to stay on as head of a reconstituted team and resume his efforts to resolve the 14-year-old conflict.

Mr. Bongo had offered his resignation on the grounds that Libya's refusal to cooperate with his mission has a personal humiliation.

Libya insists that the border tract is Libyan territory and cannot be subject to arbitration.

OAU Assistant Secretary General Sylvester Nsamenang told reporters that Mr. Bongo had not yet agreed to continue but the pan-African organisation had fulfilled the conditions he laid down on Tuesday and was hopeful he would withdraw his resignation.

The Aouzou dispute was the most serious issue facing the African heads of state at this conference and the rest of the summit is expected to be plain sailing by

comparison. The leaders on Wednesday completed their debate on events in southern Africa and issued a declaration condemning the policies of the South African government.

The declaration said the OAU "again condemns the racist regime and its policy of state terrorism." It called for a prohibition of imports of South African farm products, coal, uranium, iron and steel.

The declaration came as leaders at the annual meeting considered draft resolutions prepared by foreign ministers during a weeklong pre-summit meeting.

One proposal addressed the AIDS problem and called on African countries to work with the World Health Organisation to curb the deadly disease, but the heads of state and government apparently did not discuss the issue.

Draft documents also called for increased support for liberation movements in South Africa and Namibia.

The draft resolutions also condemned the policy of U.S. President Ronald Reagan's administration on Angola and urged West Germany to drop an alleged plan to dump nuclear waste in the Namibian desert. Bonn repeatedly has denied any such plan.

The resolutions also repeated a longstanding OAU call for an international conference to discuss the continent's \$200-billion debt.

A proposal to set a debt repayment ceiling of 20 per cent of export earnings died after opposition from countries seeking a debt rescheduling through a conference with creditors.

Genscher to visit Baghdad

BONN (R) — Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher accepted an invitation to visit Baghdad in talks on Wednesday with Iraqi counterpart Tariq Aziz, signalling West German moves to soothe a row over who started the Gulf war.

The Bonn Foreign Ministry said the ministers met in Paris to discuss the war and the United Nations resolution calling on Iran and Iraq to end their conflict.

The ministry said Mr. Genscher accepted Mr. Aziz's invitation to visit Iraq this autumn, on a date to be fixed.

Diplomats in Bonn described the talks as good and constructive and said West Germany appeared to be on the way to pacifying Iraq over a remark by Mr. Genscher in a radio interview.

The West German embassy in Paris said the two men would also meet in New York during the opening of the U.N. General Assembly in September.

Iraq called off economic talks with West Germany in protest at the radio interview in which Mr. Genscher referred to the Gulf conflict as "a terrible war which was begun by Iraq and in which poison gas has been used by Iraq."

West Germany is one of the few Western states to maintain full ties with both Iran and Iraq and the row has dented its efforts to play the role of honest broker.

Iraq has broken off economic talks with West Germany set for early next month and diplomats say it has also suspended talks with West German firms engaged in projects in Iraq.

King visits army unit

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein, the Supreme Commander of the Jordanian Armed Forces, Wednesday visited a unit of the Armed Forces undergoing training exercises.

Accompanied by Armed Forces Commander-in-Chief Field Marshal Sharif Zaid Ibn Shaker, the King heard a briefing on the training programmes and watched the unit performing exercises with live ammunition.

Present during the visit were His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah Ibn Al Hussein, His Royal Highness Prince Talal Ibn Mohammad and a number of senior army officers.



His Majesty King Hussein, accompanied by His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah Ibn Hussein, His Royal Highness Prince Talal Ibn Mohammad and Armed Forces Commander-in-Chief Field Marshal Sharif Zaid Ibn Shaker, visits an army unit on Wednesday (Petra photo).

Murphy underlines U.S. resolve to press on with Gulf convoys

WASHINGTON (R) — A top U.S. official said Tuesday Washington would press on with its convoys of re-registered Kuwaiti ships through the Gulf despite the embarrassment of the first ship hitting a mine.

Assistant Secretary of State for the Middle East Richard Murphy said nine more Kuwaiti tankers would be put under the American flag within the next six weeks and then five or six convoys a month would be escorted through the Gulf.

Mr. Murphy faced harsh questioning from Democrats on a congressional committee to which he was testifying over why the supertanker Bridgeton was hit by a mine on the first escort of former Kuwaiti ships up the Gulf

last week.

"This is an embarrassment, no question," he told the committee. "The fact the first U.S. escorted convoy through the Gulf was allowed to take place without any ability to clear mines known to be in the seaway infuriated Democrats on the committee."

Robert Torricelli of New Jersey was mainly angry at President Ronald Reagan.

"The right questions never seem to get asked in this administration's execution of military policy," he said.

"As a commander-in-chief of historic proportions, I am so tired of being embarrassed. For a president who was going to make American proud again, he was

done nothing but embarrass me," he said.

"Rather than enhance (U.S.) security, it has genuinely damaged it. There is nothing that damages the security of a great power than for it to be belittled and embarrassed."

Mr. Murphy said Washington was discussing with its friends in the Gulf and with allies ways to prevent a recurrence of the fate of the Bridgeton.

The mine blew a large hole in the bottom of the 401,382-tonne Bridgeton, one of two tankers put under the protection of the U.S. flag and warship escorts earlier this month.

"We are working with states in

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Soviets link cut in long-range missiles to ban on space arms

GENEVA (R) — The Soviet Union made new proposals on Wednesday to ban space weapons, saying Washington must accept such restraints if it wanted deep cuts in long-range missiles.

Alexei Obukhov, deputy leader of the Soviet arms delegation, told reporters agreement to reduce long-range nuclear missiles was inseparable from a ban on space weapons.

He said Moscow would present a draft treaty on long-range, or strategic, nuclear arms "in a few days" but emphasised that such an accord could be signed only after space weapons were banned.

U.S. assails Soviet proposal

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States said a new Soviet proposal on space weapons was disappointing and appeared to offer no change in Moscow's long-standing demand for restrictions on America's "Star Wars" programme. State Department spokesman Charles Redman also said it was time the superpowers moved ahead on a 15-year-old pledge to reduce long-range strategic arms without adding additional conditions like those advanced by the Kremlin.

The Kremlin has taken a tough stand on cuts in these weapons since the superpowers resumed arms control efforts in March 1985. It has persistently linked cuts to banning space arms.

"It is simply not possible for

the two (issues) to be de-linked," he told reporters at the Soviet diplomatic mission.

Mr. Obukhov was waiting for the full U.S. arms negotiating team to arrive at the mission, where the Soviets outlined the proposals at a special plenary session.

U.S. President Ronald Reagan has said his arms control priority is securing 50 per cent cuts in the superpower strategic arsenals.

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New Italian government is sworn in

ROME (R) — After five months of political confusion in Italy a new five-party government took

office on Wednesday headed by Christian Democrat Giovanni Craxi, 44, the country's youngest prime minister since World War II.

The 30-member cabinet of Christian Democrats, Socialists, Republicans, Social Democrats and Liberals was sworn in by President Francesco Cossiga and is expected to win votes of confidence in both houses of parliament by next week.

The bearded Craxi, treasury minister for the last five years, smiled and joked with reporters after the ceremony, clearly relieved to have succeeded. His two-week effort to form a government was unexpectedly delayed by last-minute haggling over ministries by the Social Democrat Party Tuesday night.

Asked for a comment he said: "We have said enough already, now it is time to work."

The swearing-in ended a five-month power vacuum which began on March 3 when a similar coalition led by Socialist Prime Minister Bettino Craxi was brought down by a fierce power struggle between his party and the majority Christian Democrats (DC).

The dispute led to general elections six weeks ago.

Mr. Craxi led two identical coalitions for three-and-a-half years but political analysts believe Mr. Craxi's government is unlikely to restore such stability.

Mr. Craxi was nominated by Mr. Cossiga to circumvent the Christian Democrat-Socialist squabbling, which continued unabated after the election.

Mr. Craxi's rapid success in forming a government was due to his acceptability to both parties and the approach of August when politicians like to join the exodus out of the hot cities.

But the dispute between Mr. Craxi and Christian Democrat leader Ciriaco De Mita — a fundamental struggle for political dominance — has only been shelved.

Political analysts say it could erupt at any time after controversial referendums in the autumn on nuclear energy and accountability of judges, issues on which the D.C. and Socialists disagree.

Most analysts think Mr. Craxi will last until next spring, long enough to push through the 1988 budget.

The composition of the new government is similar to Mr. Craxi's cabinet although the Socialists, who gained in the June election and who have conceded the premiership, have won the extra ministries. There are 15 Christian Democrats, eight Socialists, three Republicans, three Social Democrats and one Liberal.

Mr. Craxi, 44 today, is not the youngest member of the cabinet which has many ministers in their 40s. Social Democrat Culture Minister Carlo Vizzini is 40.

Some 16 members of the government are ministers for the first time. They include Giuliano Amato, 49, a top aide of Mr. Craxi, who is treasury minister and deputy prime minister.

The new ministers also include Renato Ruggiero, head of the Foreign Ministry who was the senior official organising last

Palestinian beaten to death in Jenin jail

TEL AVIV (R) — Relatives of a Palestinian who died in an Israeli jail in the occupied West Bank last week say marks on his body show he was badly beaten.

Israeli attorney Felicia Langer told Reuters that 23-year-old Awad Hamdan was arrested on July 9 at his home near the West Bank town of Tulikarem on suspicion of links with Palestinian nationalist organisations.

His family was informed of his arrest the next day and were told on July 22 he died of a heart attack while awaiting interrogation in Jenin prison, said Ms. Langer, who specialises in defending Palestinian prisoners.

Jenin prison officials told family members Mr. Hamdan was killed by a snake bite. Ms. Langer said.

In an affidavit sent to the defence and police ministries, Mr. Hamdan's brother said relatives cleaning the body for burial found swelling and bruising above the left eye, near the kidneys and around the genitals.

The affidavit added that the dead man was a keen sportsman, in perfect health and a recent medical checkup showed no signs of heart trouble, Ms. Langer said.

She noted that there have been frequent allegations of brutality towards Arab prisoners in Israeli jails and that Mr. Hamdan was kept in a wing under the direct responsibility of the Shin Bet "security" service.

The Shin Bet itself is currently the subject of an official inquiry into accusations that it uses brutal methods of interrogation.

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Armocost in Greece for talks on bases

ATHENS (R) — U.S. Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs Michael Armocost arrived in Athens on Wednesday on an official two-day visit for talks covering the future of American military bases in Greece, government officials said. Shortly after his arrival from Turkey, Mr. Armocost met Greek Foreign Minister Karolos Papoulias. He is due to hold talks with Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu on Thursday. The visit marks an improvement in relations between Washington and Athens following a row earlier this month over American charges that Greek officials had contacts with Palestinian guerrilla leader Abu Nidal, diplomats said.

The cabinet has only one woman, Christian Democrat Rosa Russo Jervolino, 50, whose Ministry of Special Affairs includes responsibility for women.

month's Venice summit of leading industrialised democracies. A Socialist, he becomes foreign trade minister while another Socialist, Italian Olympic Committee Chairman Franco Carraro becomes tourism minister.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Swiss ambassador marks national day

AMMAN (J.T.) — On the occasion of Switzerland's national day, the Swiss ambassador in Amman, Harold Borner and Mrs. Borner hosted a reception Wednesday evening at the Swiss embassy in Amman. The reception was attended by foreign ambassadors, a number of ministers, senior government officials, and key public figures as well as representatives of the local and foreign press in Amman.

Jordan to attend information council meeting

TUNIS (Petra) — Jordan, along with 11 other Arab countries, has agreed to attend the meetings of 22nd session of the Arab Information Ministers Council which will be held here August 27. The meeting's agenda includes reports on the utilisation of the Arab Satellite Network (ARASAT), activities of Arab league missions abroad as well as developing Arab radio and T.V. programmes. The meetings will also discuss supporting media and cultural activities in the occupied Arab territories, supporting south Lebanon through Arab information action, establishing Arab news centres abroad, establishing an Arab company for T.V. production at the regional and international levels and establishing an Arab news agency.

Foreign Ministry official meets with Chilean envoy

AMMAN (Petra) — Foreign Ministry Secretary General Nabih Al Nimr on Wednesday received Chilean Ambassador Alberto Yokam. During the meeting, the two discussed matters related to an agreement for economic and technical cooperation between two countries signed in 1981. They also discussed the visit which Chilean deputy foreign minister will come to Jordan before the end of this year for talks on strengthening bilateral cooperation. Mr. Nimr also on Wednesday received Swedish Ambassador Lars Lonnback.

International Youth Festival tours Aqaba

AQABA (J.T.) — A delegation from the first International Youth Festival, currently performing at the Jerash Festival, Wednesday visited the Ports Corporation and fertiliser factories as well as historical sites in Aqaba. The delegation toured the installations and saw the progress of work.

Amman, Tunis mayors hold talks

TUNIS (Petra) — Greater Amman Mayor Abdul Ra'ouf Al Rawabdeh discussed recently with the mayor of Tunis, Mohamed Ali Suleiman, existing relations between the two capitals in various fields. The two sides stressed the necessity of cooperating and exchanging experience in providing services. Mr. Rawabdeh also reviewed with the Tunisian minister of cultural affairs, Zakariyya Al Mstafa, bilateral relations.

OPEC grants Jordan \$5 million loan

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Fund for International Development will extend a \$5 million loan to Jordan to finance the second stage of the Aqaba Thermal Power Station project, according to the OPEC news agency, OPECNA.

The first stage of the station was also financed by the fund through a \$10 million loan in 1983.

The project's aim is to meet the country's future power demand and improve the quality of power-supply services.

The loan has an annual interest of five per cent, plus a one per cent service charge, and is repayable in 17 years, including a five-year grace period.

The OPEC fund loan will supplement a \$5 million Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) loan also to finance the thermal power station.

The Cabinet last week approved the loan.

The OPEC fund also decided to extend loans to Somalia and Ethiopia. Somalia will receive a \$6 million loan to import capital

goods and spare parts required for agricultural and industrial production, as well as foodstuffs and essential consumer goods.

This is the sixth loan to be extended by the fund to Somalia — four of the previous loans were for balance of payments support and one for a sugar project.

In addition, a grant of \$1.02 million was made by the fund to cover Somalia's subscription on the Common Fund for Commodities.

The loan carries an annual interest rate of three per cent plus one per cent service charge, and is repayable in eight years, including a three-year grace period.

UDD finalises plans for housing units

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Urban Development Department (UDD) has concluded plans for building housing estates at Umm Nuwara in the capital's suburbs and has announced a tender for the construction of the estate's first 207 housing units, according to UDD Director General Hisham Al Zaghra.

Dr. Zaghra said the project will consist of 1,400 housing units and 578 plots of land of different sizes which will be distributed to other beneficiaries for building homes.

The UDD has acquired a \$26 million loan from the World Bank to finance the project.

5,500 palm trees take root at royal garden in Aqaba

AQABA (Petra) — The Aqaba Region Authority (ARA) has finished planting 5,500 palm trees at the royal garden in Aqaba. The trees have been imported from Egypt, Tunisia and Oman and their planting has been 70 per cent successful, according to ARA President Bassam Qaqish.

Mr. Qaqish spoke during a tour of the garden and was accompanied by Dr. Dureid Mahasneh, ARA secretary general. Mr. Qaqish said the planting of palm trees in Aqaba is the first such experiment in the city. The trees are now growing on a 500 dunum plot of land specially allotted to serve as a royal garden.

According to Mr. Qaqish, a total of JD 100,000 has been spent on the project, which is being co-sponsored by ARA and the Water Authority of Jordan. KARAK (Petra) — Mu'ta University President Ali Mahafzah on Wednesday met with a delegation of the first gathering of Jordanian students abroad. Dr. Mahafzah briefed them on the university's development and its future programmes. He also spoke about higher education in Jordan and its importance in serving the local community. Dr. Mahafzah also pointed out that the university aims to turn out qualified Jordanian officers.

New civil defence centre opens at Bani Kinaneh

IRBID (Petra) — A new civil defence centre opened Wednesday at Bani Kinaneh in the north Badia region of Jordan.

Civil Defence Director Lt. Gen. Khaled Tarawneh attended the ceremony and said his department was planning to open similar centres in all regions to ensure better civil defence services.

Two more civil defence centres will be opened at Azmi Al Mufri refugee camp and Al Mazar town before the end of the year, Lt. Gen. Tarawneh said.

The new centre is the 21st of its kind in Irbid Governorate and is set up on a 360 square metre area. The centre cost JD 60,000 to build and will provide better civil defence services to northern regions of Irbid Governorate, according to Lt. Col. Mohammad Al Humud, CDD director in Irbid Governorate.

The opening ceremony was attended by the mayor and governor of Irbid, other senior officials and civil defence officers.

Ambassador says South Korea set to initiate reforms

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — South Korea's ambassador to Jordan, Dong-Soon Park, said Wednesday his country is preparing for general elections, pending final approval of an amendment to the constitution proposed by rival political parties, which will recognise political power and allow direct presidential elections before the end of this year.

He said the Seoul Olympic Games scheduled for Sept. 1988, should be held on schedule and should be one of the most successful in the modern history of the Games.

Mr. Park told a press conference he held at his country's

embassy here that "since the establishment of our country, we have not have peaceful transfer of power."

He said the political compromise made by the present ruling party indicated the maturity of the Korean government and the concern to secure a peaceful transfer of power in a fully democratic process.

"What makes the current political developments unique is that both, the leaders of the government, the opposition and the general public have agreed to the course to be taken towards a more democratic development," the South Korean ambassador said. "This was a wise decision without which we would not have been able to overcome a dangerous political crisis."

The present constitution stipulates that the president, who has most of the power, be elected by an electoral college of 5,000 people. The amendment would allow people to directly elect their president with a choice of candidates. The present seven-year term of President Chun Doo-hwan ends Feb. 1988. The change in the constitution is a great concession to the main opposition parties in South Korea.

A decision by President Chun Doo Hwan in April to postpone elections until after the Sept. 1988 Olympics and the announcement on June 10 of a candidate for the ruling party sparked nationwide protests in the country with violent confrontations between students and riot police.

A June 29 statement by the

ruling party detailing an 8-point "democratisation package" assuring direct presidential elections eased the political crisis that could have ravaged the country.

The "democratisation package" included amnesty to opposition leaders and restoration of their civil rights, a free press and local autonomy. The government statement was endorsed on July 1.

Ambassador Park said his country would continue its open door policy towards all countries including East Bloc states and North Korea. He criticised Pyongyang's inflexibility towards Seoul's overtures for peace talks and declared his government ready to continue dialogue with its northern neighbour.

On the economic level, South Korea's exports last year reached \$35 billion, with a \$4.1 billion export surplus. He said Seoul continued to oppose trade protectionism and maintain a free market policy.

He said the Seoul 1988 Olympics promise to be "one of the most successful Olympics" with the expected participation of almost all East Bloc countries. "We expect that all peace-loving nations to come together for peace," the ambassador said.

North Korea, which had insisted to share the Olympics with Seoul by hosting one-third of the Games, has been given a Sept. 17 deadline to agree to a final proposal made by the International Olympic Committee for staging five sports in North Korea.



SYRIAN SAGE: Syrian satirist, Duraid Lahham, better known as "Gawar," gestures emphatically to make a point in his play "Shaqiq Al Nu'man" (red anemones) at the South Theatre Tuesday night. Sparring from his political barbs, Mr. Lahham will continue his performances at 9:00 p.m. tonight and Friday night, the final day of the Jerash Festival (Photo by Youssef Al-Akhan)

France orders force to Mideast

(Continued from page 1)

opinion. The French warships currently in the region are the Marne and the Protee, along with the command ship Victor Schoelcher.

The French anti-submarine Corvette Georges-Leygues, equipped with Exocet and Croal missiles, was to join the three warships sometime this week.

According to reports from Bahrain, French warships have

started selective escorts of French commercial vessels in the Gulf.

Marine executives quoted by AP said Tuesday that a French navy unit last week shepherded the 276,221-tonne oil tanker Athos through the Gulf to the Saudi Arabian oil terminal of Ras Tanura.

Shipping agents along the Gulf said the two-way escort of the Athos was the first of its kind by a French warship in the region.

Murphy underlines U.S. resolve over convoys

(Continued from page 1)

the region, with allies and with our own resources to ensure future convoys have a passage safe from mines," Mr. Murphy said.

"We will take all steps necessary to ensure there will be no recurrence," he said.

Mr. Murphy declined to give details, but U.S. officials who asked not to be identified said Washington was talking to Western allies such as Britain and France on providing minesweeping vessels, of which the U.S. navy has only three.

They said it was likely the Pentagon would send three minesweeping helicopters to the region, but that would be a short-term solution.

A broader, more integrated operation including allied and friendly minesweeping ships would provide a longer term remedy to the problem of keeping Gulf oil flowing to the Gulf, the officials said.

The officials said Kuwait and other Gulf states were discussing the purchase of such vessels from the Netherlands and that the operation could include two ships from the Saudi Arabian navy.

Mr. Murphy said that whether the U.S. helicopters would operate out of Kuwait was still "an open question, because we are in the middle of discussions with Kuwait and other states on how to carry this out."

The officials denied report that Kuwait had turned down a U.S. request that it be given facilities from which to operate the helicopters. No such request had been made yet, they said.

The officials also said they were worried that the "tanker war" could resume soon despite an informal ceasefire by Iraq since July 15, five days before the U.N. Security Council ordered a ceasefire in the Gulf war.

Iraq has accepted the Security Council order on condition Iran

does. Tehran has criticised the move but has not formally rejected it.

The officials said their concerns over a resumption of the war at sea, in which Iran says it only retaliates for Iraqi strikes, stemmed from a lack of assurances of a continued suspension in a meeting on Monday between Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz and U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz.

"The only commitment they made was to help the (U.N.) Secretary General (Javier Perez de Cuellar) implement the resolution. That was the basic message," one said.

U.S. officials say they are not sure which side planted the mine that hit the Bridgeton, but Pentagon spokesman Bob Sims said it appeared to have been sown shortly before the supertanker passed near an Iranian-controlled island.

High seas hamper Gulf mine-clearing operations

(Continued from page 1)

Sources quoted by Reuters said the bad weather could delay the return trip out of the Gulf by the Bridgeton and the Gas Prince, due to finish loading 40,000 tonnes of propane and butane for Japan on Wednesday. They had previously been expected to sail off Friday with three U.S. warships now off Bahrain.

Some shipping experts questioned whether the Bridgeton was seaworthy. The blast holed one cargo tank and cracked three others. Only one, the forward ballast tank, has been temporarily repaired.

"With all the nipping by the American coast guard prior to the refloating operation I find it very surprising that, for political considerations, they are now prepared to bend the rules like hell," said one.

But other experts said the giant ship, which is 366 metres long,

was big enough to absorb the shock and slow speed. They said careful distribution of the load would minimise stress on the hull.

After unloading, the Bridgeton is due to enter dry dock in either Bahrain or Dubai for repairs.

The sources said the U.S. navy had warned commercial shipping to stay clear of the channel past Farsi, the best in the northern Gulf for deep-draft tankers.

Earlier, Pentagon officials said Saudi Arabia had told the U.S. navy that more mines were moored in the section of the Gulf where the Bridgeton was struck, and some of them already had been recovered.

The officials, who spoke to AP on condition of anonymity, said it was too early to say how many mines might have been strewn in the area near Farsi Island because additional work was required to confirm the underwater contacts.

One source, however, said the Saudis — apparently using one of

their four minesweeping ships — had located seven mines in the area, three since Monday.

Another official, reached Tuesday evening, said "several" of the mines had actually been recovered by the Saudis.

About 100 kilometres south of Farsi, divers on Tuesday detonated a floating mine which had lodged for several days against an oil platform in the offshore Abu Safah field shared by Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, sources quoted by Reuters said.

The mine was a different type to the one that holed the Bridgeton, which U.S. experts say was tethered to the bottom and submerged six metres below the surface.

Shipping sources said the tanker route would need constant surveillance to keep it free of mines once it was cleared. "No sooner than they're cleared than a couple of boats could put new mines down," said one source.

Crown Prince to attend televised seminars on education

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan will attend televised seminars to discuss reports submitted by technical committees that are preparing for a national educational conference to be held before the opening of schools for the coming 1987-88 scholastic year, Minister of Education Thouqan Hindawi said Wednesday.

He said members of the Council of Higher Education and teams currently gathering data and information on education will openly debate the need for educational reform.

The minister was speaking during a visit to one of the centres where educational teams are sorting reports and preparing the groundwork for the national conference.

A total of 31 committees on education grouping 300 specialists are involved in the process of gathering data and channelling their reports to a supervisory committee.

The committees are expected to complete their work early next week, according to Ministry of Education sources.

Mr. Hindawi stressed that the conference's recommendations and resolutions will serve as guidelines for the country's educational strategy into the next century.

Man shoots sister to death then turns self in to police

AMMAN (J.T.) — A 25-year-old man from Shafa Badran district, northwest of Amman, killed his sister, aged 22 for what he claimed was an action taken in defence of the family's honour.

A report in the Arabic daily Al Ra'i said that the man, identified only as H.F.H., killed his sister by shooting her several times with a handgun while she stood on the Amman-Zarqa highway at about 10 p.m. Monday.

The murderer turned himself in and banded the handgun to the police who are conducting an investigation, the paper said.

Two drown in cesspool

AMMAN (J.T.) — Two workers drowned Monday when they fell into a cesspool in Jweideh, south of Amman, according to the Arabic daily Al Ra'i.

Imad Hussin Taha and Yasser Jamil Al Rawashdeh had been standing on a truck used to remove sewage from the cesspool when they lost their balance and fell in, the paper reported.

Civil defence personnel rushed to the scene, but were unable to rescue the men. The two bodies were eventually pulled from the cesspool.

Nearly 13,000 apply to Univ. of Jordan, Yarmouk

AMMAN (J.T.) — Nearly 13,000 students have applied to the University of Jordan and Yarmouk University for the 1987-1988 academic year, according to sources at the universities.

All applications are being channelled through post offices throughout the Kingdom. The last date for submitting enrolment applications is Aug. 3, 1987, according to the sources.

Last year, the University of Jordan and Yarmouk University each admitted 3,000 students. This year, the former is expected to do the same while the latter is expected to admit 2,000. The

Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) is expected to accept up to 2,000, according to the same sources.

Mu'ta University announced it will admit 700 students, of which 300 will enroll in the civilian wing and 400 will enroll in the military wing.

According to the results of the tawjibi examinations this year, 98 students passed with 95 per cent average and above compared with 39 students in 1986. This indicates the universities will this year accept students with higher grades than those of last year to the various faculties.



PRINCESS TAGHRID PATRONISES GRADUATION: Her Royal Highness Princess Taghrid patronised Wednesday the graduation ceremony of the 19th batch of students of the Wasfiel Vocational Centre which took place at the Palace of Culture at Al Hussein Sports City. Dr. Monseigneur Ra'ouf Najjar, the centre's director

Special Olympics team heads for U.S.

AMMAN (J.T.) — A delegation from the Jordanian Sports Federation for the Handicapped (JSFH) left for the United States Wednesday to participate in the International Special Olympics for the Mentally Handicapped.

According to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, the Jordan Olympics are to begin on August 2 in Chicago. But, according to press

release issued by Nazik Al Hariri's Special Education Centre, the Olympics are to start July 31 and be held at Rotterdam University in Indiana.

The delegation is the first Arab team to take part in the Special Olympics for the Mentally Handicapped. The event will involve 4,500 participants from 72 countries.

The delegation is headed by Dr. Yasser Salem, a member of the JSFH and Nazik Al Hariri, director general of the Special Education Centre.

Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ibn Zaid, president of the JSFH, will represent His Majesty King Hussein at the opening ceremony.

Soviets link missile cut to ban in space

(Continued from page 1)

Mr. Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev came close to striking a deal to limit long-range arms to 6,000 warheads each during an Iceland summit last October. The talks collapsed in a dispute over space weapons.

U.S. negotiators presented a draft strategic arms treaty on May 8. Mr. Obukhov said the new Soviet proposals would strengthen the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) treaty, which bans deployment of anti-missile defence systems.

Documents presented on Wednesday included protocols and common understandings for a full-fledged treaty, he said, adding that more details would be given in coming weeks.

Mr. Reagan has strongly backed missile defence systems. He launched his multi-billion-dollar strategic defence initiative (SDI) in March 1983, which Washington says aims at researching land and space-based defences to make attacking missiles "impossible and obsolete."

He has rejected any compromise which would jeopardise SDI work, saying the so-called "Star Wars" scheme could serve all mankind and would not be bargained away at the superpower talks.

The superpowers began open-ended, make-or-break talks on INF missiles on April 23. They have agreed to remove and destroy all their INF ground-launched rockets, which can hit targets from 500 to 5,000 kilometres away. They have some 2,500 nuclear warheads on such missiles.

Cabinet approves agreement between Jordan and Bulgaria

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet, during an ordinary session held Wednesday, authorised Planning Ministry Secretary Dr. Ziyad Fariz to sign a draft for cultural cooperation between Jordan and Bulgaria for the years 1987-1989.

The Cabinet also approved Jordan's participation in the 57th conference for liaison offices of regional Arab offices for boycott-

ing Israel which will be held in Damascus in mid-August.

In addition, the Cabinet agreed on Jordan's participation in the meetings of the Arab Postal Union executive bureau which will be held in Dubai.

The Cabinet also agreed on sending 29 Jordanian teachers to Oman and 8 teachers to Saudi Arabia.

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Undeniable repression

THAT torture is a routine accompaniment to the interrogation of political prisoners in the occupied territories has long been an open secret in Israel. The Israeli authorities of course have denied and continue to deny it, in the face of evidence submitted by Amnesty International and by lawyers, journalists and human rights activists in Europe, the United States, and not least in Israel itself. But these denials have become harder than ever to sustain in the light of two recent cases which aroused bitter controversy inside Israel because they exposed the working methods of the Shin Bet, the Israeli internal security service which is responsible for the interrogation of political prisoners — and even more so because in both cases it was demonstrated that there had been a conspiracy to cover up the facts and the miscarriage of justice which had resulted.

The first case arose out of the murder of two Palestinians who had been captured after hijacking a bus and who were beaten to death by officers of the Shin Bet who then succeeded in putting the blame on a senior Israeli army officer. It was only after a group of dissatisfied Shin Bet officers had revealed the true story that the facts were established. To avoid further embarrassing revelations, the president of Israel then took the controversial step of giving a free pardon to all those concerned.

The more recent case was if anything even more damaging to the reputation of the Shin Bet because no Palestinians were involved, while the Shin Bet's victim was again an officer in the Israeli army, Captain Izat Naffso had been convicted of treason in 1980 by a military court and had served nearly seven years of an 18 year sentence. He had always protested his innocence, claiming that the confession which had led to his conviction had been extracted from him under pressure by the Shin Bet. Earlier this year, taking advantage of an amendment to the law governing appeals, his lawyer succeeded in lodging an appeal with the Israeli supreme court. After re-examining the case, and influenced no doubt by the behaviour of the Shin Bet in the earlier case, the court ruled that Naffso's confession had been "illegally obtained" and ordered his release. In giving judgement, the court severely criticised the Shin Bet, emphasising the "urgency and importance" of holding a thorough investigation into its interrogation methods.

Every Palestinian arrested in the occupied territories for any offence is handed over to the Shin Bet for interrogation. What happens then? Uri Avneri, editor of the Israeli weekly Haolam Hazeh, wrote last month that "we have reported dozens of cases in which defendants who have been beaten and injured appeared before judges; but the judges closed their eyes". Were they really unaware how the defendants' confessions had been obtained, he asked, and "did not the silence of the judges give the Shin Bet interrogators the impression that they approved of their methods and so encourage them to intensify their practices?" Lea Tsemel, an Israeli lawyer who has spent most of the last 15 years defending Palestinian prisoners in the military courts of the West Bank, says that "almost everyone is maltreated under detention; in fact people don't expect anything else" — and she adds that "interrogation methods have become much more severe since Rabin became defence minister" (with responsibility for the occupied territories). There is no such thing as a "moral" occupation, says Ms. Tsemel, and "once people interrogate others in a situation of occupation — under a different system of laws and under different conditions — people will behave in a violent way... and in a situation where you don't have massive public opposition to such practices, it will go on and on."

There is opposition within Israel in the occupation and to the cruelly repressive methods by which it is maintained. It springs largely from an awareness among thoughtful Israelis of the harm that 20 years of occupation and domination have done to the fabric of their own society. Relatively few Israelis think of the Palestinians on equal terms with themselves. It is those few whom the outside world should support and encourage, not the politicians who depend on instruments like the Shin Bet to maintain Israel's supremacy — Middle East International, London.

ARABIC PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i: Welcome back

WE welcome back our monarch, returning from yet another round of efforts designed to enhance the Arab stand in Europe and to gain further support for the Arab cause. We appreciate the King's talks with British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher which covered endeavours for convening an international Middle East peace conference, ending the Gulf conflict and bolstering British-Jordanian relations and cooperation. King Hussein's moves in the European arena are no doubt contributing towards enhancing the Arab Nation's stand on the international scene; and for this reason, the Jordanian family stands behind its leader, supporting his serious endeavours for peace and his defence of the Arab Nation's interests. The Jordanian family, united behind its leader, renews its allegiance to the King and a pledge to make Jordan more prosperous, enjoying security and stability and marching towards a brighter future.

Al Dustour: King continues peace efforts

KING Hussein has returned home at the end of a visit to Britain where he held another round of talks with British officials on peace efforts. The visit which was part of the ongoing efforts spearheaded by Jordan towards enlisting the Western world's support for the Arab just cause has no doubt contributed towards enhancing the Arab stand. The Europeans, convinced by the King's views about the situation in the Middle East are now more inclined to support the Arab views in this question, thanks to the King's relentless efforts. British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher showed such tendency while on a brief visit to Washington where she urged President Reagan to support efforts aimed at convening an international conference that would bring about a permanent peace to the Middle East. Mrs. Thatcher stated that efforts will continue for holding the international conference in which all concerned parties will have to participate along with the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council.

Sawt Al Shaab: U.S. nuclear-arms Israel

ISRAEL is fully exploiting its strategic alliance treaty with the United States by strengthening its political, military and logistic stands at all levels. On the military front Israel has acquired more than its needs of conventional weapons and nuclear arms. The latest weapon provided to the Israeli arsenal by the U.S. expertise and capital is the Jericho II rocket which is now causing a world-wide controversy. On the political front Israel has benefited from America's support and assistance and maintained its intransigent policies and adamant position with regard to the establishment of a permanent peace in the Middle East. Israel depends on Washington's biased attitude towards the Jewish state and continues to reject the idea of an international conference to achieve the aspired peace. On the logistic level, Israel has declared its possession of a long range missile capable of reaching Soviet territory.

Israel threatens Al Haram Al Sharif; Palestinian women stand for its defence

By Grace Halsell

RATHER than destroy Al Haram Al Sharif, the noble sanctuary of Jerusalem, with one blast of dynamite (which could demolish the Western Wall, where Jews pray), the Israelis are moving in a more subtle way. As they have been confiscating West Bank land since 1967 dunum by dunum, they are now confiscating the Old Walled City of Jerusalem house by house.

With a member of a Palestinian family whose roots in Jerusalem go back about a thousand years, I visited many of the residents of the Old City who live adjacent to Al Haram Al Sharif, site of the Dome of the Rock and Al Aqsa, shrines holy to all Muslims around the world. One woman we visit wants me to take her name — Nawal Abu Asab — and wants the world to know that she is attempting to defend Al Haram Al Sharif and that she and others living near the shrine are alone, vulnerable and in need of help. Nawal is 42, and a mother of 12 children. As she talks, her eyes shine with a zest for life, even with its hardships. Her apartment is clean and simple, with one sofa, a chest of drawers and a rug. She serves tea and sweet biscuits. At night, when her husband and 12 children are sleeping, she has time to think her thoughts: "I wrote my impressions of the Israeli treatment of Palestinians — and their plan to take the mosque. I think I wrote it well."

One night, Nawal was at home when she heard cries that Al Aqsa was on fire. "Without thinking, I forgot that I had children, I forgot that I had a husband, I left my house. I ran to the mosque. I didn't think of myself. I was trying to pull out carpets so they didn't catch fire". This was when an arsonist set fire to Al Aqsa, extensively damaging the mosque and destroying many cherished and irreplaceable relics. The man whom the Israelis claimed was the lone perpetrator of the crime was later declared "insane" and sent back to his country of origin. In all such attacks on holy shrines, the

Israeli authorities have tended to dismiss each suspect as part of a "fringe element" or a "crazed" individual — "not to be taken seriously."

Since 1967, the year the Israelis seized military control of Jerusalem, Jewish nationalists, many of them armed Israeli rabbis, officers, soldiers and religious students, have on more than 100 occasions stormed the grounds of the Muslim shrine. A former chief chaplain of the armed forces, Shlomo Goren (who later became Israeli's chief rabbi), was one of the first to lead an assault on Al Haram Al Sharif, in August 1967. In almost all of the armed assaults, religious Israeli youths have been led by militant rabbis. "We should not forget," said Rabbi Shlomo Chaim Ha Cohen Aviner "that the supreme purpose of the ingathering of the exiles and the establishment of our state is the building of the temple. The temple is the very top of the pyramid." The Jewish militants who have attempted to sabotage the mosque during the past 20 years have never been condemned by the chief Sephardi and Ashkenazi rabbis.

Nawal was again in the mosque praying on 11 April 1982. This was the day that Alan Harry Goodman, an American, became possessed with a "crazy idea" to "shoot it out" at Al Aqsa Mosque. A native of Baltimore, Maryland, he moved to Israel where he served in the army before walking into the holy shrine on his mission. Firing an army-issue M-16 rifle, he killed two people and wounded four others. He claimed he wanted to "liberate" the area. When Palestinians protested Israeli police shot and killed 11 of them. Both the American and Israeli governments played down the incident. "I know the shots came from four corners," Nawal relates, "so this could not have been the act of one crazy man. I

thought about this and I realised this must be a bigger plot. The day when they come to storm the mosque is not far away. They are going to do it. And who will protect the mosque? They always claim that this quarter is theirs, that they will get it. They are a determined people. They are smart; they operate with long range plans; they want all these houses and if they cannot get them by peaceful means, they will terrorise the residents."

"What happened is part of an ongoing harassment," said Muhib, another Old City resident. He told me that militant Jewish settlers who have moved nearby had broken water pipes in his home so that there was a continual dripping of water onto his household furnishings. The settlers "also throw stones and toss fire bombs into our homes... The Israelis install former criminals to overlook our families and these religious zealots throw stones constantly. Many of our shop owners don't open their stores, for fear of the Jewish terrorists who roam the streets. Palestinians are restricted in building new housing projects, but there is one new Palestinian housing project. I think the Israelis may have agreed to this project as part of their plan to evict families from the Old City. The Israelis as part of their plan to move the Palestinians to this new housing unit. The Palestinian who built this housing project comes from a highly respected family. He undoubtedly did not know that he might be part of the plan to get Palestinians to move from the Old Walled City, but the Israelis are using him for their purposes."

Another woman told me that once she had dreamed of leaving the Old City. "It was my dream to get a plot of ground where my children could play, and where I could grow vegetables. But now," she said — looking at the house where the Jewish settlers lived — "I am determined to stay" — Middle East International, London.

The nightmare economy

By Julie Flint

The following article is reprinted from the Guardian

THE LEBANESE economy, says an economist whose sense of humour is considerably more resilient than his subject, is heading where no human eye has ever set foot.

The Goons, whose phrase that was, were talking about Shagrir. The economist was talking about a "nightmare": "For the first time in living memory," he says, "the Lebanese are becoming paupers. They must adjust — from a reckless kind of prosperity based on hit-and-run economic tactics to hard work in the context of a modern industrial economy — or die."

On paper, Lebanon is now one of the poorest countries in the world. The dollar appreciated 380 per cent against the Lebanese pound last year and 110 per cent in the first half of this year — truly vital statistics in a country that imports 85 per cent of its needs. Inflation is well into three digits and rising more than the pound is falling. Industry, which survived the initial conflagration of 1975-76, is now working at

only 25 per cent of capacity. The interest on the huge public deficit exceeds total government income.

More important, with the end of war apparently as far away as ever, confidence in the economy at home and abroad has finally collapsed.

Lebanon's poor are now dirt poor — unable to go to the dentist, to buy meat, milk or medicine. The minimum wage, although hiked 40 per cent already this year, is only enough for a married man with no children to buy a daily newspaper, a sandwich and a cold drink. If he has no access to parallel economy — drugs, weapons, charitable institutions — there is nothing left over for housing, clothing, health or utilities. Trade unionists estimate that a sixfold increase in the minimum wage — currently about \$25 — would just enable a family of four to meet its minimum needs. Small wonder, then, that west Beirut's Islamic orphanage has taken in 17 abandoned babies in less than three months, compared with one a month in more normal times.

The middle classes, who have always looked to the West for their values, are witnessing a dramatic reorientation in their

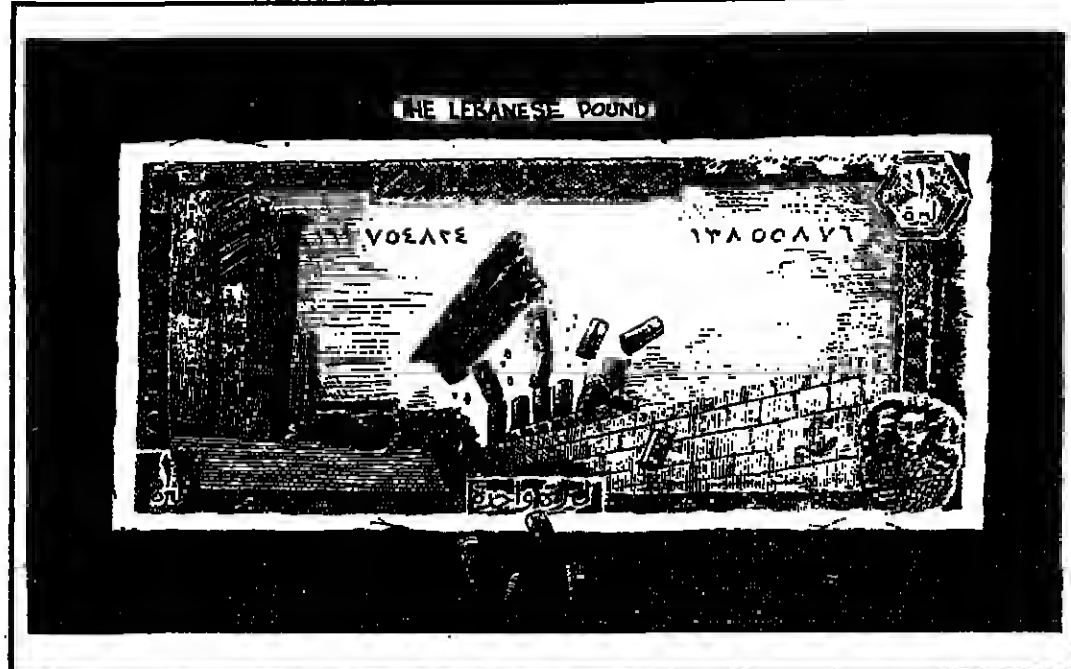
lives. Western culture and Western clothes are now out of reach for most. "Made in Lebanon" is the boom industry — in the admitted absence of boom — but is, for the moment, an adjustment for which many are not ready.

The streets of Beirut look more and more like those of a Third World capital. Thousands of Asian women who came to Lebanon in the good old days for the sole purpose of sending money to their families can now barely support themselves, far less send money home or get there themselves.

After the pound lost more than 14 per cent of its value in a single week earlier this month, Lebanese leaders made one of their periodic stabs at stopping the drop. The prime minister, a Muslim, met the finance minister, a Christian, for the first time in many months and the pound plummeted again.

"The government in Lebanon is unable to do anything about anything except talk," says the economist. "Meetings — a lot of hot air under the bridge — only make things worse."

In the blackness, there are small patches of light. These have



nothing to do with Lebanon's much-vaunted gold reserves, which cannot be frittered away in time of instability, or with the calls by laissez-faire advocates for the abolition of customs duties. As a former minister puts it: "We have to decide if we are running a state — or a boutique." If there is any glimmer of hope, it is, for example, that imports of industrial machinery rose 200 per cent last month, inflation-adjusted.

The Lebanese are slowly adjusting to the fact that they can produce more, and export it.

In the short term, economists predict further decline — aggravated by the sheer, maybe, involved in electing a new president next year. In the middle term, they expect an increase in trade union militancy that will cut across sectarian lines and perhaps suggest one way in which society can be overhauled and rebuilt. In

the long term, many believe the question is not the survival of the economy — but of the country itself.

It is a question of special concern to those who inquire not about the price of dollars, but daily bread. There is a sticker in the window of one of the second-hand shops that are increasingly common in Beirut. "Will the last person to leave the country, kindly switch off the light?"

Black 'people's court' under the spotlight in South Africa

By Rich Mkhondo
Reuters

SOSHANGUVE, South Africa — Humphrey Mkhize considers himself lucky to have escaped the "necklace".

One night in May last year a group of "comrades" — as South Africa's militant township youths are known — seized him from his parents' home in this Pretoria township and took him to a school where they held a "court hearing".

This story was written under South Africa's state of emergency which imposes severe reporting restrictions.

The scene was typical of similar unofficial courts set up in South Africa's black communities, where radicals, scornful of the white judicial system, dispensed township justice.

Mkhize was accused of stealing alcohol, burning tyres belonging to the comrades and of murder. He was tied to a pole and given 400 lashes by six comrades.

The comrades told him he was lucky not to be sentenced to death by necklace, where the victim's hands and feet are bound, a petrol-filled tyre placed around the neck and set on fire.

Violating unwritten township laws, Mkhize went to the police, identified his attackers and had them arrested and charged. His case against six men is being heard in Pretoria.

It is one of scores of trials in South Africa which have put alternative township structures like "people's courts" and "street committees" under the spotlight.

Street committees containing representatives from each house meet to discuss township affairs, ignoring black town councils set up by Pretoria.

Both bodies took root during the political turmoil that began sweeping townships in 1984 when young radicals clashed daily with security forces.

The government sees both institutions as part of a revolutionary strategy inspired by the exiled and banned African National Congress (ANC) guerrilla group

to overthrow the white authorities.

Pretoria has taken tough steps to stifle them under a 13-month-old national state of emergency. It effectively outlawed street committees and people's courts, which it labels "kangaroo courts", and detained many of their members.

In some areas the institutions have lost influence since the clampdown and in others they have been driven underground.

One of South Africa's biggest recent treason trials, at Delmas in the eastern Transvaal, has focused on the emergence of street committees in townships south of Johannesburg where nationwide political unrest erupted in September 1984.

Judge Kwem van Dijkhorst last month denied bail to three officials of the anti-apartheid United Democratic Front, citing their involvement in people's courts.

In another case, 30 people aged between 14 and 34 face charges of whipping and necklacing people found guilty by people's courts.

At the height of the township revolt, residents stopped reporting complaints to the police and took them to the people's courts and street committees instead.

Not everybody was happy with township justice. Many older men resented the fact that they were being judged by young comrades for crimes such as adultery.

Critics say people's courts are often violent informal street trials, marked by disorderly behaviour and ruled by unscrupulous judges.

A member of a street committee in Soweto denied the courts were places where young comrades planned attacks against collaborators with the white authorities and where self-oriented judges sentenced people to death.

In Soweto, outside Johannesburg, street committees have played a key role in organising a rent boycott to back demands for the release of political prisoners and the lifting of emergency rule.

This month, representatives from Soweto street committees met town clerk Nico Malan to discuss the rent boycott.

Student elections pit fundamentalists against PLO

By Karin Laub
The Associated Press

NABLUS, Occupied West Bank — Palestinian nationalists on Monday narrowly defeated Muslim fundamentalists in student council elections at An Najah, the largest West Bank university and a centre of resistance against the Israeli military occupation.

The nationalist factions loyal to the Palestine Liberation Organisation have controlled the council for nine of the past 10 years, but the Islamic bloc has steadily gained support.

Such elections are a rare opportunity to measure political trends in the West Bank where municipal elections have been banned since 1975 when Palestinians elected pro-PLO mayors.

After the polls closed at An Najah on Monday, supporters of the two camps rallied in opposite corners of the university courtyard, clapping and chanting political slogans.

"Nothing will stand in our way. God bless those who are steadfast," shouted hundreds of members of the PLO youth group Shabiba, who gathered around post-

ers of PLO chairman Yasser Arafat.

Many had pinned to their shirts colour snapshots of Arafat and Palestinian fighters at target practice. Others wore black-and-white checkered scarves, a symbol of Palestinian nationalism, around their heads, wrists or necks. PLO insignias and Palestinian flags are outlawed by Israeli military authorities.

In the other corner, Muslim fundamentalists prayed on mats spread on the stone floor. Dozens of women, dressed in traditional long dark overcoats and white veils despite the 35C heat, clapped to the beat of drums.

"The elections are very important," said Maher Mettatt, 23, candidate for Shabiba, which is linked to Arafat's mainstream Fateh faction. "We prove to the world that we have maintained our identity and our deep belief in democracy, even under occupation."

But a university employee who would only give her name as Mona said the election was mainly an exercise in rhetoric. "They (the students) are letting off steam. It's their way of expressing

their frustration with the occupation," she said.

Like other West Bank universities, An Najah is a centre of opposition to the Israeli military occupation which began in 1967.

On Monday, no Israeli soldiers were visible near the campus, located on a hilltop near the city of Nablus, about 55 kilometres north of Jerusalem.

But university spokesman Abdullatif Aqil said the army has stepped up actions against the university in the past year.

He said between Oct. 15, 1986 and May 15 of this year, the Israeli army ordered An Najah closed for a total of 105 days, repeatedly set up roadblocks and conducted searches on campus.

Nine male students serving on the previous council were detained without trial for periods of up to six months during the past year and two female council members were barred from leaving their village, he said.

The more pressure the Israelis put on a particular group, the more it is going to be supported by the student body," said Aqil.

Five groups competed in the election Monday.

According to preliminary results, about 2,600 students participated and the 11 Shabiba candidates won by an average margin of 200 votes. The university has 4,000 students and 3,600 of them were eligible to vote.

In the last election, Shabiba won 55 per cent, the Islamic bloc 42 per cent and three smaller PLO groups shared the rest.

Among them were the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the pro-Moscow Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

The four PLO groups had tried to form a coalition to ward off the threat from the fundamentalists, but could not agree on how many seats should be awarded to each faction.

Since An Najah won university status in 1977 and held its first council elections, the Islamic bloc has steadily gained influence.

"We began in the university with two people praying in this corridor," Khaled Ka'bi, 21, a candidate for the Islamic bloc, said before the vote. "Now we have more than 1,000 supporters."

China's old men prepare seaside last stand

By Stephen Nisbet
Reuters

BEIDAIHE, China — China's top old men are gathering at their seaside villas to prepare the last big battle some of them may fight in defence of the revolution.

The Octogenarians who have dominated China's Communist Party since before the 1949 revolution are under increasing pressure to hand power to a younger generation they do not fully trust.

The world will have to wait until a party congress in October to know how successful the advocates of change have been in rejuvenating the leadership.

The five-yearly conference is the top political event of the calendar, but fewer decisions may be made there than in informal parleys in the coming weeks in the villas among the pine trees near the shores of the Bohai Gulf in eastern China.

"Beidaihe is where the real congress is, Peking is just protocol," said one Eastern European diplomat.

The Chinese do not announce

the start of the leaders' summer exodus to what one writer, noting Beidaihe's turn-of-the-century British architecture, called "a strange hybrid world, part revolutionary China and part Victorian Europe."

"We really don't know what goes on in Beidaihe, who comes here or where they stay," said a Western diplomat lounging on the foreigners' beach.

"But the leaders are sure to have a lot to talk about this summer to prepare for the congress."

The personnel changes to be decided this year are inextricably linked to the future of China's trailblazing programme of economic and political reforms.

As China struggles to propel its one billion people out of backwardness by the end of this century, the government has experimented with many unorthodox notions to harness individual enterprise to the cause of building Socialism.

The greatest changes in the 11 years since Mao Tse-tung died have been on the land, where peasants have more say in decid-

ing what they grow and keep most of the money they get when they sell it.

New housing and private factories have mushroomed in many rural areas as peasants have become more prosperous.

Similarly far-reaching reform in the cities has been a trickier matter.

Schemes to boost efficiency in state enterprises by rewarding good workers and penalising bad ones arouse opposition from Communist Party officials ousted from local prominence by dynamic new managers.

In one evening in Peking, it is possible to hear a government official boast of stays in \$400-a-night hotels in Italy, then see hundreds of people reeking of dirt asleep on the pavements outside the main railway station.

All this is a bit much to swallow for the more conservative among veteran politicians, whose experience goes back to the shared hardships of the long march in the mid-1930s.

Deng Xiaoping, the 82-year-old political supremo who has

turned many a Maoist notion on its head, argues that some must get rich more quickly than others to show the way ahead.

He has said that the reforms he deems vital for the party's and the country's survival cannot be achieved "if old and sick people stand in the way of young, energetic and competent people."

Diplomats said the people Deng most wants to stand aside probably include old revolutionaries like President Li Xian-nian, fellow politburo standing committee member Chen Yun and Peng Zhen, who is the top figure in the National People's Congress (parliament).

One 79-year-old veteran, Bo Yibo, apparently at Deng's behest, has called publicly for other old men to retire and make way for fresh talent.

Strong suggestions by Deng that he will stand down from at least one of his own official posts in October make some diplomats think this is part of a bargain designed to persuade the other old men to retire.

Global maps from drawn memory receive world grade of 'fair'

By Joy Aschenbach
National Geographic

WASHINGTON — You are given a blank piece of paper and asked to draw a map of the world from memory. You are told to label all the countries and include any other features of interest or importance. Time limit: 30 minutes. How would you do?

The 4,277 first-year college students in 54 countries who were assigned this task by geographer Thomas F. Saarinen of the University of Arizona averaged about 30 countries per map — fewer than one-fifth of the independent countries in the world.

Saarinen, who personally administered the classroom test in 30 of the countries surveyed last year, says he would give the maps a worldwide grade of "fair." Most students managed to draw and some all seven continents and the major countries, but lacked specific knowledge about the rest of the world.

The 640 U.S. students who were tested ranked with the world average in numbers of countries labeled, he says, but made more mistakes in placing the countries on the map. The more than 4,000 maps from every continent except Antarctica represent the largest collection of world sketch maps ever assembled, Saarinen says, and will form an archive of computerized information about mental images of the world.

"Before we can have a shared world image," he says, "we have to understand what images are at present, and why." The college mapping project was sponsored by the International Geographical Union and financed by the National Geographic Society.

Saarinen selected a cultural cross section of students enrolled in introductory geography courses, because they already had completed their countries' basic educational process and were in-

terested enough in geography to take a college course in it. "If they don't know how to draw a map of the world," he reasons, "who does?"

What was totally unforeseen, Saarinen says, was "the perceived importance of Europe everywhere. It has to be part of the colonial legacy, at least in the educational system. I thought there'd be a home-continent bias, with it pictured biggest, but more important was the exaggerated size of Europe."

"Our mental images," he observes, "don't seem to have caught up with the reality of a world of free and independent nations."

Eighty per cent of the students placed Europe in the center of their world. This positioning, with the Americas on the left and Asia on the right, has been the most commonly used world-map projection since the discovery of the New World.

Even in countries such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Saudi Arabia, virtually all students drew "eurocentric" maps, whereas "sinocentric" maps would put Asia in the middle. Most students in Thailand, Hong Kong, Singapore, and the Philippines also centered Europe, although that put their own countries on the map's edge.

Lingering colonial influence was further evident, Saarinen says, in that small European countries such as Great Britain showed up on most maps, and maps from faraway places such as New Zealand contained detailed information about the mother continent.

Saarinen says that, with the exception of certain European countries, the nations most often included were those of continental dimension such as the Soviet Union, Canada, China, the United States, Brazil, India, and the continent-country, Australia.

Distance, he assumed, would

be a factor in map-making: Countries closest to home drawn in detail, and places farther away sketched as "vague blobs with lots of blanks." But, he found, in several cases such as New Zealand there were other criteria — language, cultural and political ties — that made distant places better known.

In contrast to the exaggerated size of Europe, Africa was generally sketched smaller than it should have been, with lots of blank space where countries should be — reflecting a general lack of awareness of the Third World.

When Saarinen entered a classroom with instructions to "draw the world," he says, "at first there was a gasp or a groan. But then the students would get interested, drawn right in. They'd become engrossed."

The countries Saarinen did not reach were either visited by his research assistant Charles MacCabe, a geography doctoral student who focused on Latin America, or were contacted by mail, with local college teachers administering the test.

Among the diversity of maps and map information, Saarinen notes: — Several maps from Australia turned the world upside down. Most Australian students sketched sinocentric maps, which centered Australia as well as Asia. Some also made the switch from "down-under" to "up-over" maps. One one, a student wrote: "Remember, Australia is on the top of the world, not the U.S.A., and especially not Russia."

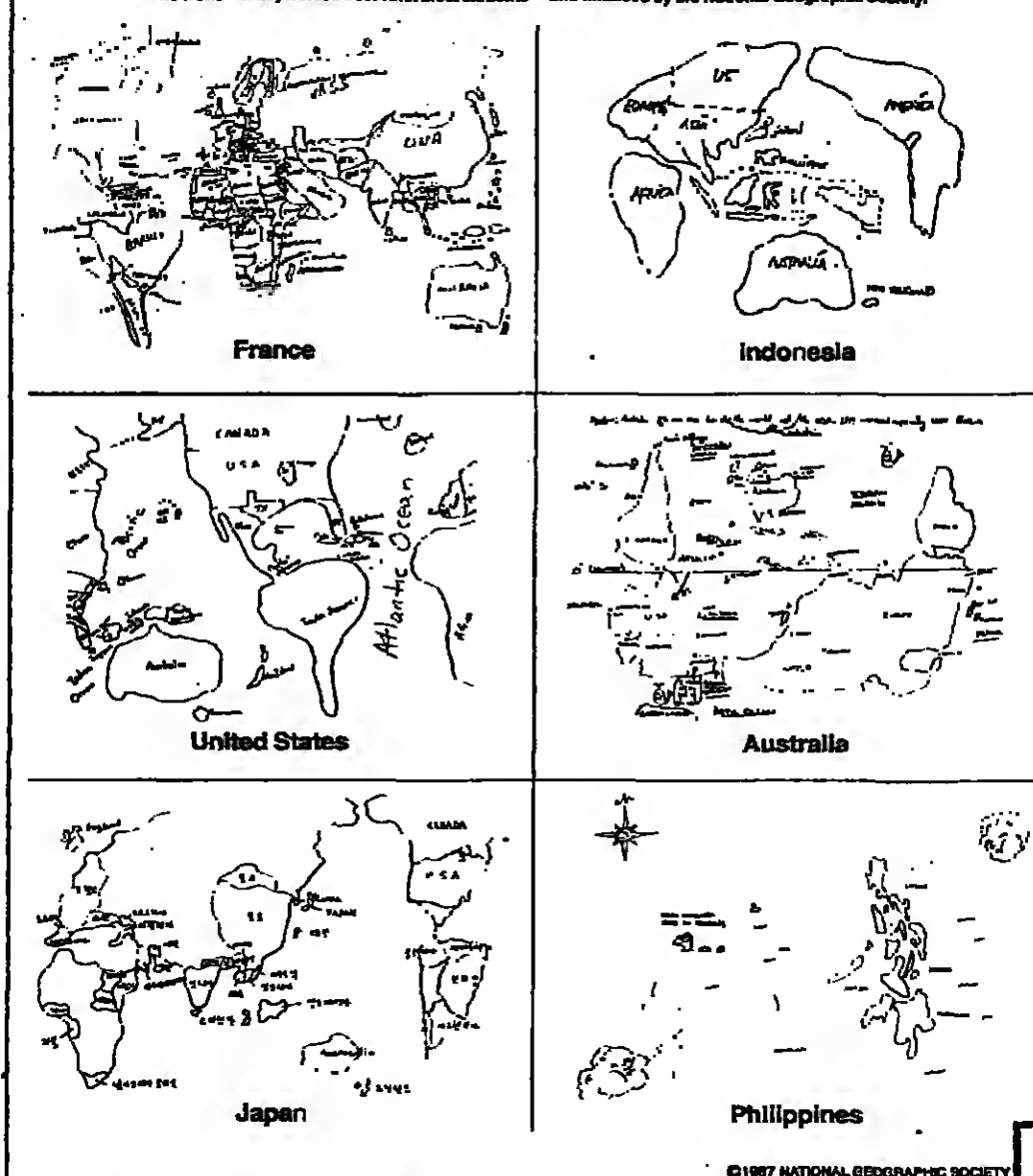
— Postage-stamp countries were most often left off maps, especially such countries in Central America, West Africa, Southeast Asia, and Europe's Balkan Peninsula.

— Hungarian maps, the product of an educational system that stresses learning all the countries of the world, were among

Students' Maps Reflect Geographical Bias

Sketched from memory, these world maps are a sampling of the 4,277 drawn by first-year college students in 54 countries. Geographer Thomas F. Saarinen collected the maps to test mental images of the world — many not too accurate. Most students

centered Europe; some, Asia or the Americas. Nearly all took the task seriously, but a few saw it as a chance for humor. The mapping project was sponsored by the International Geographical Union and financed by the National Geographic Society.



the best.

— An extremely ethnocentric map, drawn in the Philippines, prominently outlined the island nation and left the rest of the world blank, labeled "terra incognita." A map from Africa put

the Philippines in the Caribbean next to Cuba. — A Spanish map made the United States as big as the Soviet Union and bigger than Canada, and moved New York to the Arizona-Mexican border.

What do you do with 4,277 sketch maps when all the information they contain is finally fed into a computer and analyzed? Saarinen says he hopes to publish the most representative ones as "an atlas of world images."

New Israeli road safety drive urges prayers, air-conditioners

By Galina Vromen

TEL AVIV — Notorious for handling their cars like tanks on a battlefield, Israeli drivers are the target of a new campaign to reduce road accidents that cost more Israeli lives than war.

When temperatures and the accident rate soared this month, the government announced plans to make air-conditioning compulsory in all cars within three years to help Israelis keep their cool at the wheel.

The campaign on the roads led to an emergency parliamentary debate in which ultra-orthodox parliamentarian Rabbi Avraham Shapira blamed pornography.

"Can anyone who sees such pictures drive afterwards?" he asked. Shapira suggested a

national day of fasting and prayer to beseech the almighty to stop traffic accidents.

He was not the first religious leader to blame blasphemy for death on the roads. When a bus carrying schoolchildren collided with a train in 1985, killing 21 people, then interior minister Rabbi Yitzhak Peretz attributed the disaster to the desecration of the sabbath, when orthodox Jews do not drive.

Israel's cabinet has instructed a ministerial committee to suggest new ways to improve road safety within 30 days.

To spur the campaign, judge Dov Levin, best known as head of the Jerusalem court trying accused Nazi John Demjanjuk, has appeared in television advertisements against careless driving.

But road safety experts say the only way to lower accident rates is to spend more money to improve roads, educate drivers better and cut taxes on spare parts to make it more economical for Israelis to maintain their cars properly.

Israel spends \$1,000 per capita on defense a year, compared to \$15 per capita for road safety, even though more deaths are caused on the road than in war, said Moshe Becker, a senior researcher at Israel's Road Safety Centre and consultant to parliament's sub-committee on highway safety.

Since the establishment of the Jewish state in 1948, some 14,000 Israelis have died in five wars and resistance attacks while over 15,000 have been killed in traffic

accidents. Some 650 Israeli soldiers died during Israel's three-year occupation of Lebanon from 1982 to 1985, but more than twice that number died in the same period on the roads.

Traffic fatalities increased from 387 in 1985 to 415 in 1986 and are expected to reach 450 by the end of 1987 unless road safety improves.

"If we had a similar rise in the number of deaths from guerrilla attacks, it would cause a political earthquake in Israel," Becker said.

Although they are quick-tempered, impatient and careless on the road, Israelis are far from being the world's worst drivers and their record has improved in the last decade, Becker says.

Drunken driving, once practically unknown in Israel, is slightly on the rise, but Israeli drivers still mostly crash into each other while perfectly sober.

There are 3.2 fatalities in Israel for every 100 million km travelled. The figure is the same as for Italy, far lower than for Spain or Venezuela, but considerably higher than the 2.1 fatalities in Britain and the 1.9 deaths in the United States for every 100 million km travelled.

"Israel is in a relatively good situation, but that is because we are in an early stage of motorisation," said Becker.

Israel has half as many cars per capita as Western Europe. As it acquires more cars the number of accidents is likely to increase, he

added. Becker has proposed a five-year plan to spend \$450 million to improve Israel's roads, but he worries his suggestion will be ignored. "Nothing will happen until a minister is injured in a road accident," he said.

In fact, some already have been. When the late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat made his flight to Israel in 1977, then Israeli defence minister Ezer Weizman hobbled with a cane to greet him because he was recovering from a traffic accident.

And several years ago, actress Elizabeth Taylor spent a visit in Israel in a neck brace after she suffered from a whiplash in a traffic accident with minister Ariel Sharon.

Egyptian papers print almost anything

By Wolfgang Koydl

CAIRO (DPA) — Egypt's interior minister is personally involved in torturing political prisoners, the U.S. ambassador accuses, the U.S. secret service Mossad shoots leading politicians in Cairo — these are just some of the stories that appear daily in Egypt's opposition papers.

Every day, fantasy, secrecy and rumours, enter an explosive, and usually entirely untrue, union in the country's opposition press.

Under headlines like "Secrets of the Week" or "Banned News," readers find unattributed reports, catering for an insatiable hunger for sensationalism and highly dubious news.

President Hosni Mubarak is proud of the fact that he has never banned a paper, and Egypt's press is considered the most liberal in the Arab World. Under Mubarak, the variety of papers and magazines has increased tremendously.

About a dozen publications, most of them linked with one of the political parties, are competing every week for readers' attention.

More and more, Mubarak has to appeal to the editors' sense of responsibility. A university lecturer, who like most of his fellow-Egyptians is all in favour of the relatively liberal press laws, recently said, "I don't know how long the state will be able to tolerate what these papers put out — they are really stirring up the people."

As an Israeli diplomat put it, "What they are writing here, could never be printed in the papers anywhere else." His country is one of the most frequently attacked targets of the press.

The Islamic Al-Nar recently published a report on the Bedouins of the Sinai peninsula,

which included the "information" that "young Jewish women from Europe flock to the Sinai in droves and seduce young Bedouins into marriage, thereby contributing to the disintegration of social structures and making sure that Israel will have an easy time of it in the next war."

Israel was also flooding Egypt with drugs and undermining morals and decency in the country, the paper charged.

A Cairo lawyer recently explained his theory on the current wave of terror attacks in Cairo with evidence on the pages of the Liberal Socialist Party's Al-Ahram: "I am sure that the Israeli secret service Mossad is behind all these attacks. Israel is an aggressive country, trying to dominate the world through treachery."

Another favourite target is the United States and its strong presence in the country. U.S. Ambassador Frank Wisner is often described as some sort of "governor-general," who, according to Al-Ahram, "summons ministers and governors to his office to give them orders."

The most recent attack on U.S. diplomats in Cairo was supervised directly by Washington in order to press demands for an American security force here, the paper said.

Some of the leading opposition journalists are quite aware of the dangers of this kind of "reporting" and of the fact that the authorities may well get tired of it. But they point out two things. First, that the opposition papers are practically cut off from the flow of official information and are therefore dependent on second-hand news.

Secondly, they take over an argument often heard from journalists in other Arab countries, namely that nothing is so improbable that it can't happen in the Middle East.

Plastic houses are here, prepare for heat guns instead of hammers

By Trudy Tyanan
The Associated Press

PITTSFIELD, Massachusetts — The home handyman of the future might find a heat gun or ultrasonic welding device handy as a hammer for working on his plastic house.

So say engineers at General Electric Co., who see the use of high-performance plastics, developed by the aerospace industry, as the next innovation in home construction.

About 20 to 25 per cent of all plastics now go into the home construction market, but only about 10 per cent of these are the high-strength and heat-resistant resins that could replace wood, metal, glass and other traditional building materials.

The company is building a test-house laboratory at its research centre in Pittsfield, a small city 200 kilometres west of Boston, to explore new uses for the high-grade resins in everything from windows to plumbing.

The two-story house will be built from all plastic materials, but will look like a traditional New England-style house, said GE programme specialist Eric Babinski.

The construction and design of new homes has changed significantly in recent years, although the changes may not be readily apparent.

The biggest change is the move toward prefabrication, where components of the house — ranging from parts of the roof to entire sections of a house — are assembled in a factory and shipped to the building site.

Entire sections of walls, floors and roofs are assembled in a factory and taken to the site. Interior and exterior walls, including electrical and plumbing work, can be put together to form one unit.

By using prefabricated materials, builders can cut down on the number of subcontractors needed to complete a job.

Segments of a modular house can be produced in the factory, complete with fixtures, carpeting and even paint on the walls. They can be 95 per cent complete when they leave the factory.

"Plastic houses have been around for 40 years, but they've been in strange, futuristic shapes and largely unsuccessful," Babinski said. "When you start changing the aesthetics of a house, you get onto shaky ground."

"The trick is to provide a high-quality production item that is consistent with what people want in a home," he added.

He said that plastics have been associated with disposable items. "But a house is not a throwaway item. It's real estate that should appreciate in value."

The high-performance resins are now two to 10 times more expensive than traditional building materials, he said, but could become competitive as builders look toward prefabricated and component assembly to hold down costs.

The median price of a new American house, with three bedrooms, two baths and 150 square metres of living space, sells for \$106,800, according to National Association of Realtors in Washington.

"The trend in the industry is to look for increased productivity and that's where these high-performance plastics might find a fit," Babinski said. "About 40 per cent of the homes now built use some form of premanufactured construction."

He said, "the key is to redesign the wall using the high-performance plastics, to create a component that could do everything a

traditional wall does but offers a performance advantage."

The engineering plastics typically have high melting points, create little smoke when they burn and have good sound-muffling qualities. However, the airtight home would need good ventilation systems, and researchers

would have to ensure that the plastics themselves did not give off harmful gases, Babinski said.

The wall and other units could be assembled much like children's plastic building blocks, he said, but would require the development of whole new high-tech industries for home repairs.

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Randa Habib's Corner

Stop child abuse

THE relationship between parents and children is a very complex one. Parents, in our part of the world, tend to be too protective, but unfortunately the relationship at times goes to the other extreme.

Child abuse seems to exist in Jordan. News reports in the local papers show sadly that children are being too often mistreated. The authority of the parents does not mean that they have the right to harm their children, or to use "repression" against them. In order to educate their children, parents have sometimes to punish them, but punishment must not be physical. Depriving a child from his favourite TV show is much more effective than beating him or her. Anyhow, parents should not be allowed to harm their children, the law must set firmly against those who "torture" the youngsters.

The case of the boy found by villagers with his legs chained, is monstrous. At the hospital where people more kind toward him than his own family took him, the doctors found traces of cigarette burns on his body.

The government must come down very hard on such parents and should enact laws and measures that deter any father or mother from such inhuman acts.

AIDS threatens epidemic in powderkeg of Asia

By Peter Bale
Reuters

SYDNEY — AIDS threatens to explode into an epidemic if it reaches the powderkeg of Asia, home for over half the planet's population.

Poor health services, a booming sex industry and high incidence of other sexually-transmitted diseases could light the spark, health authorities warn.

"I am afraid you have the potential for a major catastrophe. I am really afraid of that," World Health Organisation (WHO) Director General Halldor Mahler warned last month.

"If we allow AIDS to get into the powderkeg of Asia then we are really going to have a problem."

Health ministers and AIDS specialists from 27 Pacific region countries meet in Sydney this week for a WHO symposium on the threat of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

Experts concede that Asia's 2.8 billion people have been spared an epidemic, but warn some countries are incubating a growing toll of infections.

By last month, Asia, not including Australasia, had reported only 151 of the 52,064 AIDS cases known worldwide.

The figures are the tip of an iceberg, as the disease can strike up to five years after infection. That threat has led a number of countries to close their doors to AIDS carriers by blood-testing foreign residents and planning tough laws against people spreading the virus.

Tourists visiting South Korea for next year's Olympic games will have to carry certificates declaring they are free of AIDS.

Scout plans seven years' jail for anyone spreading AIDS. Taiwan plans two years' jail for the same offence and Hong Kong retains a never-imposed life sentence for homosexuality.

Foreigners intending to live in China must undergo AIDS tests before obtaining a residence permit. Thailand will deport AIDS-carrying foreigners.

In India, where 86 people have contracted the disease and five died, 20,000 foreign students face controversial compulsory blood tests.

Some countries have all but refused to acknowledge AIDS for fear of frightening tourists.

The disclosure last week that AIDS cases had tripled to about 100 this year in Thailand sparked alarm in a popular tourist destination known for its vigorous sex industry.

"If you don't know anything about condoms they might as well be talking about earmuffs," said a health official.

Australia media warnings use morbid images of the grim reaper, the medieval image of death, while a rock group plays a condom-promotion song wryly entitled "Roll it on, Robbie."

In China, the world's most populous country, only three people have died from AIDS — a foreign tourist, a Chinese who returned from a looq spell abroad, and a haemophilic contaminated by imported blood.

In Australia, AIDS has brought crime and victimisation.

Bayern Munich wins 1st W. German Supercup

FRANKFURT, West Germany (Agencies) — New signing Jurgen Wegmann scored twice for Bayern Munich who beat Hamburg 2-1 on Tuesday night to become the first winners of the West German "Supercup," a new trophy contested by the league champions and cup winners.

Poland's Miroslav Okonski scored in the 39th minute to put cup holders Hamburg in front, but, after a shaky start, Bayern came back to equalise on the hour.

Wegmann, formerly with Schalke, clinched victory for Bayern and 5,000 marks (\$2,700) each for his teammates with his second goal just three minutes from the end.

The game, played in Frankfurt, featured Bayern as the country's reigning First Division champions against the German Cup champions, Hamburg.

When Wegmann charged in front of the net to score his second goal and put Bayern in front, his momentum carried him into Hamburg's goalie Ulrich Stein and both players fell to the ground.

Stein reacted instantly with a right jab to Wegmann's face.

He was given a red card for deliberately fouling Wegmann and replaced by Hamburg's reserve goalie Richard Golz for the last six minutes of play.

Some 22,000 fans were on hand to watch the first Supercup game that soccer federation officials have said will be staged annually, similar to Britain's traditional Charity Shield, which is played at Wembley Stadium each year.

The West German season opens officially on Saturday with the first round of league matches.

Athlete gaoled for sexual assault

GREEN BAY, Wisconsin (AP) — Professional football player Mossy Cade was sentenced on Tuesday to two years imprisonment and a \$15,000 fine after being convicted of two counts of second-degree sexual assault.

Prosecutor Royce Finne called the sentence too lenient and said he was outraged by it. He said Cade, who played for the Green Bay Packers, would be eligible for parole in six months.

Cade, who was convicted May 23, had no comment on the sentence, but his lawyer, Donald

Zuidmuller, said the athlete "has acknowledged he has made a mistake and he has asked for understanding and forgiveness."

The victim attended the sentencing and appeared stunned by the verdict. Sitting in the back row of the courtroom, she was comforted by her daughters when the sentence was announced.

Chuck Hutchinson, a scout with the Packers, said there would be a place for Cade on the roster if he was free to return to the team.

Roche finishes 3rd in Dutch Race

STIPHOUT, Netherlands (AP) — Irishman Stephen Roche, cycling his first race since winning the grueling 1987 Tour de France, finished third Tuesday in the Stiphout Professional Race. Roche lost the final sprint against Spaniard Pedro Delgado, who won the race and was followed by Dutch veteran racer Joop Zoetemelk. The three top finishers had held a 15-second lead on the rest of the cyclists throughout most of the 100-km race.

Soggy games, run and fun out in the sun

By Sana Atiyeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Watch people trying to take out as many bricks as they can... from under the water, or people trying to retrieve treasure from a box underwater and guarded by an octopus. Watch swimmers collect as many mines as possible without being blown up.

Does this sound serious and exciting? Serious: no, exciting: definitely. This is the Knockout Competition — a fun activity that should not be missed.

The games begin at 10:30 a.m. on Friday at the Orthodox Club in Amman. Nine teams, each consisting of three men and three women, are preparing themselves for the spectacular event.

This is the second time the Knockout Competition takes

place. Last year the event was in September. This year, the social committee of the Orthodox Club decided to do it earlier before students start heading back to universities abroad.

Because of the extremely hot weather, Nabil Haddad, the sponsor, said he was considering small breaks between every two games so that the spectators can cool off in the pool. There is also an hour-and-a-half lunch break.

Mr. Haddad said that the aim behind the competition is to encourage swimming activities and to gather young people together in a friendly and fun manner. He said that last year's games proved to be a success.

It took only one week to organize last year's competition and therefore only already produced material was used such as tennis balls, paint cans and balloons.

Competition was that it was too long of a day for the competitors. He added that this year's competition will include games where not all members of the team participate, thus giving them a rest.

Besides the three games mentioned earlier, there are five others. Moby Dick is where one member of each team must swim like a whale using only his or her arms, making a large figure 8. There is a canoe marathon, but that does not necessarily mean just racing inside the pool. Another race is trying to set a proper dinner table as fast as possible inside the pool. The seventh game is trying to catch the team's fish out of the water with the right letters and forming the hidden word. The final game is left as a surprise and will be announced prior to its start.

This year, however, the club's committee has taken over six weeks to prepare the event and, thus, included in a larger variety of games. Mr. Haddad said that the games are all designed and implemented by Kamal Mufti. Mr. Mufti is using gypsum, wax, polystyrene, sponge, and plastic for the material the competitors will have to use. (Look out for oversized plates, forks, spoons and glasses!)

Mr. Haddad told the Jordan Times that the main complaint he heard about last year's Knockout

The Knockout Competition includes the following teams: The Marriott Hotel, YWCA, Royal Jordanian, Jiries and Khleif, Tuf Orthodoxy Educational Society, Orthodox Club, Fine and Rotar Act. The first two winning teams will receive trophies. Spectators must pay JD 1 per adult and 500 fils per child. There will also be a lottery on the tickets bought by the audience. And, proceeds, according to Mr. Haddad, of the competition will go to building a new swimming pool at the Orthodox Club.

Minister slams Nigerian athletes over games allowance protest

LAGOS (R) — Nigeria's powerful but disgruntled contingent of athletes for the All-Africa Games were leaving for Kenya Tuesday night with a sharp rebuke from Sports Minister Bayo Lawal ringing in their ears.

Attacking their protest last week over low daily allowances during the August 1-12 games, he told them to accept the money or stay at home.

"If only 10 of you are prepared to accept the \$10, let only the 10 go to Kenya," Air Commodore Lawal warned the athletes at a pep-talk in Lagos, the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reported.

"You should first aspire to

greatness before asking for rewards," he added.

Officials at the National Sports Commission who were present at the meeting confirmed the report but said the row appeared to be over and the minister's tough warning was not challenged.

They said most of the 325-strong group of competitors and officials were leaving for Nairobi on a special flight on Tuesday night while the rest would follow on Thursday.

Last Thursday's demonstration, which disrupted training, was staged when athletes were told they would be given just six dollars a day in Kenya, despite reports that some officials were to receive a princely \$150 daily allowance.

The one-day strike produced an increase to \$10, which officials insist is the maximum permitted to amateurs by the International Amateur Athletics Federation (IAAF).

"They had the impression, wrongly, that officials would receive \$150. But the demonstration was very unfortunate, unruly and undisciplined," Abdul Karim Amu, chairman of Nigeria's Amateur Athletics Association, told Reuters.

PEKING — With China first again in gold medals at the 10th Asian Games in 1986, China has secured attained the Asian number 1 position. The nation now strives to become a world sports power. In fact, this pursuit began when the country regained its position on the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in 1979. Great efforts in training programmes, recruiting and improved coaching techniques will all help China collect a large share of golds at future world games.

At the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games, China captured 15 gold medals, placing third in the medal tally. For the Chinese athletes, not content with this crop of laurels, this triumph only sharpened their enthusiasm to bring home more in international competitions.

Since China's Olympic debut, the nation has shown marked improvement in previously weak areas, such as swimming and track-and-field. But, as expected, most successes have been in China's traditionally strong items such as badminton, shooting, diving, gymnastics, small-category weightlifting and table tennis.

At the 39th World Table Tennis Championships, held in New Delhi, India, in February 1987, Chinese paddlers proved themselves with table stunts that xeroxed their previous record. Once again they captured six of the seven gold medals, defending China's title of "Table Tennis Kingdom."

Table tennis will be officially included for the first time in the next Olympic Games, with four gold medals offered. Chinese world-champion paddlers Jiang Jialiang and He Zhili, in particular, are girding themselves for those four Olympic golds. Xu Shaofa, head coach of the Chinese national table tennis team, says: "Though we are facing a strong rivalry from our Swedish counterparts, we are quite sure of ourselves in forthcoming, major world table tennis contests."

Chinese divers, another strong force, attained fresh records this year. In April 1987, women divers Gao Min and Xu Yanmei won two golds in individual springboard and platform at the



At the National Women's Weightlifting Championships in May, Li Ning jerks 105 kg to break the world record of 100 kg in 60-kg category (Photo by China Features)

5th World Cup Diving Tournament in Amersfoort, The Netherlands.

Chinese strongmen and women have become a world force in small-category weightlifting. He Zhuoqiang, 20, snatched 116.5 kilograms in 52-kg category to break his own world record of 116 kg, at the 19th Asian Weightlifting Championships in Japan on April 17. He will defend his world title in the upcoming world championships and the Olympiad.

Chinese strongwomen headed by Bi Caijuan, Yang Weiqin and Cai Jun, surpassed 16 world records at the First National Women's Weightlifting Championships in Changchun City, Jilin Province in May. So far the best world records in seven women's weightlifting categories, from 44-kg to 75-kg, are in the hands of Chinese strongwomen.

Some observers from the International Weightlifting Federation predict a triangle tussle among Bulgaria, China and the United States in the world's first women's weightlifting championships. These contests will be held in the United States this November. Federation members say Chinese women are likely to win all golds in the first seven categories.

The Chinese weightlifting hierarchy, however, noticed a gap in their 82.5-kg, 85-kg and even higher categories, with the world records held by the Bulgarians and Americans. China is strengthening its weak area in swimming. Chinese swimmers

did not win a single gold medal at the 7th and 8th Asian Games. They earned three golds at the 9th Asian Games. Then at the 10th, the Chinese made a big splash forward in the swimming pool by capturing 10 golds.

Now China has a group of promising swimmers, such as Yan Ming, Qian Hong, Huang Xiaomin and Jin Fu, who have grown into full-fledged contenders. Though they still have some distance to go to reach world level, the swimmers are expected to put in impressive performances in future world competitions.

Li Ning, China's super gymnast who won three golds in the 1984 Los Angeles Olympiad, will perform his swansong in the next world sports extravaganza. Li hopes to copy his previous winning record before his retirement. Teammates Lou Yun, Xu Zhiqiang and others are all anxious to show their own gymnastics stunts in the coming sports shows.

Three years ago, Xu Haileng won for China the first Olympic gold with his pistol. Xu also hit the bull's eye as a prolific medalist in the 10th Asian. He set a world shooting record there, only to be shattered by his teammate, Wang Yifu last April at a national shooting competition in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province. Now they are both fixing their scopes on the future games.

In other strong areas such as the race walk, water polo, cycling, rowing and women's volleyball, Chinese athletes are sharpening their competitive

edge with persistent exercise and training. In addition, China is also reinforcing its weak areas in track-and-field, and ballgames such as basketball and football.

With past sports-vacancies in China such as boxing and golf, China is preparing to fill the void with contenders. The country restored its boxing sport last May by holding national boxing championships in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province, after a break of 28 years. This effort is aimed at the Asian Games and its 12 golds offered for boxing, and other world boxing competitions.

Golf, a latecomer to China's sports fields, is not as popular as other games. Chinese young golfers staged their debut at the 10th Asian but did not place in the winner's circle. China has built five golf courses that meet international standards and is hopeful about future success in golf.

To help Chinese sports figures act out of the slogan, "Break out of Asia and March on to the World," the nation has made herculean efforts. One measure adopted has been a search for young talent in national competitions, among different age groups.

In this same vein, China has built, all across its country, specialising "homes" for volleyball, football, swimming, track-and-field, and other sports. Here recruiters select and train young people showing talent in certain sports.

With more than 300 million sports participants, China can provide a great many promising rookies with great potential from which the Chinese sports authorities can select.

Both Chinese coaches and athletes understand that all advances in sports require as much brain as brawn. Advanced training and coaching methods in China now rely on technological devices and computers. There are thousands of scientists in sports physiology, psychology, nutrition and related area that can offer help to the athletes.

With China's generation of new sports stars coming of age, plus improved training and coaching methodology, the nation expects to put on quite a show at the coming major world contests — China Features.

THE Daily Crossword by Nancy McCarthy

ACROSS	1 Water body	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
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Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

1 Across	2 Across	3 Across	4 Across	5 Across	6 Across	7 Across	8 Across	9 Across	10 Across	11 Across	12 Across	13 Across	14 Across	15 Across	16 Across	17 Across	18 Across	19 Across	20 Across	21 Across	22 Across	23 Across	24 Across	25 Across	26 Across	27 Across	28 Across	29 Across	30 Across	31 Across	32 Across	33 Across	34 Across	35 Across	36 Across	37 Across	38 Across	39 Across	40 Across	41 Across	42 Across	43 Across	44 Across	45 Across	46 Across	47 Across	48 Across	49 Across	50 Across	51 Across	52 Across	53 Across	54 Across	55 Across	56 Across	57 Across	58 Across	59 Across	60 Across	61 Across	62 Across	63 Across	64 Across	65 Across	66 Across	67 Across	68 Across	69 Across	70 Across	71 Across	72 Across	73 Across	74 Across	75 Across	76 Across	77 Across	78 Across	79 Across	80 Across	81 Across	82 Across	83 Across	84 Across	85 Across	86 Across	87 Across	88 Across	89 Across	90 Across	91 Across	92 Across	93 Across	94 Across	95 Across	96 Across	97 Across	98 Across	99 Across	100 Across
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